TASK FORCE SANTA FE
TRAILBLAZER
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Heroes of Flight 83

By John Whiteside
Herald-News

SPC Brian Childress

SPC Mike Strauss

FLIGHT 83, Germany to Chicago - Two Joliet families are beaming with pride about their military sons after receiving a letter from an Army Reserves lieutenant colonel. He told them their sons were heroes.

Army Reserves Lt. Col. Gary Morsch, a Vietnam veteran and now a medical doctor who runs a world relief organization in Kansas, was on American Airlines Flight 83 on April 18 when he took command of the two young Joliet soldiers.

The flight from Frankfort, Germany, to Chicago was loaded with American passengers when an unruly passenger attempted to get into the cockpit. The two Joliet soldiers were on their way home for emergency leave.

"I'm proud of these young soldiers and what they did," Morsch said in a telephone interview. "They are the cream of the crop, in my opinion." He was talking about Army SPC Mike Strauss, 19, the son of Bob and Alice Strauss, and Army SPC Brian Childress, 21, the son of Terry and Norma Childress. Both soldiers are with an Illinois National Guard Unit [1-131 IN BN] now on active duty with Task Force Santa Fe in Germany.

On April 18, both were on Flight 83 returning to the United States to attend funerals after deaths in their families. On that flight Morsch who flies all over the world frequently for Heart to Heart

C/ 1-178 CAPTURES TASK FORCE CHALLENGE

Soldiers tackle the obstacle course at TF Chal

GERMERSHEIM, Germany – Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 178th Infantry Regiment, claimed victory at the Task Force Santa Fe Challenge on June 14 at Germersheim.

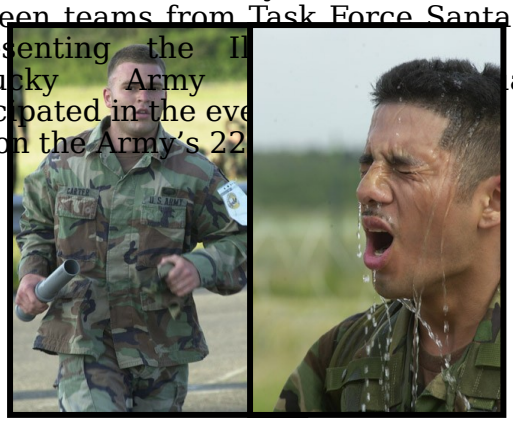
Staff Sgt. David Palasz, leader of the Charlie Company team attributes their success to prior planning and teamwork.

Palasz said the team's strongest event was the 11 mile road march which they completed in just over 3 hours.

The Charlie Company team leader also believed his team cut up to one-half hour from their road march time by fording a murky, smelly river that other teams avoided.

Second place was captured by B/ 2-130 stationed in Mannheim, and Third went to C/ 2-137 from Kansas. The victors in the relay race were C/ 2-130, and the obstacle course was mastered by C/ 2-123rd Armor.

Fifteen teams from Task Force Santa Fe, representing the Il and Kentucky Army ard, participated in the eve held on the Army's 22



SPC Carter running the relay, SGT Oliva cooling off during competition.

BRAVO COMPANY 1-131 IN LEADS THE WAY

Commander's Cup Trophy Champions – B 1-131

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany- The 100th ASG Sports & Recreation Division conducted the Company Level Skeet & Trap Championship at the Grafenwoehr Skeet range, 05 June 02. CSM James E. Van Patten III provided the opening and closing remarks. Twenty-nine firemen from four different units were shooting 1 round (14 shots each) of Skeet and 1 round (10 shots) Trap.

The team trophies were presented to following companies:

Champion Team: B Co. 1-131st IN, Vilseck

Runner Up Team: C Co. 1-131st IN, Hohenfels

Third Place Team: D Co.1-4th IN, Hohenfels

Individual Awards were a clean sweep by B 1-131, with Third Place going to SSG Frank Harold, Second to SGT Eric Fulkerson, and In[illegible]SG Br[illegible]

Sp[illegible]en III[illegible]hr fo[illegible]

Commander's Cup Runner's Up – C 1-131

Words From the TOC

LTC Danny Hay Task Force 2-137 Battalion Commander

I would like to take this opportunity to brag on the job that the soldiers of TF 2-137 are doing here in the beginning, this BN, like the other two was comprised of composite companies with soldiers and officers that in some cases had never met before. We started our team building at Ft. Stewart by setting very rigid standards and ensuring that the NCO's enforced those standards. This required some attitude adjustments for some individuals and met with some resistance from others. Setting and enforcing standards are the back bone of making a company and BN strong from top to bottom.

We have maintained those rigid standards and it is paying off in major dividends now. We have 5 very strong companies here whose officers and NCO's will go back and become the elite of their states. They know how train by Task, Conditions, and Standards and expect missions to be given to them within those confines. I am very proud of these companies and of the job they are doing.

CSM Vorhies and I travel a great deal visiting our troops as well as the Senior Tactical Commanders and ASG and BSB Commanders and their staff's. The praise that they have for our soldiers is overwhelming. If nothing else this BDE deployment has gone a long way in breaking down some misconceptions that the active duty soldiers have about our ability and dedication.

The companies have integrated into their respective communities and have had the opportunity to do some outstanding training with active units and on their own. We will have well over 100 soldiers leave Germany with a Schutzenschnur medal, others will go home with EIB's. We will have 33 soldiers that will complete PLDC here.

C-1-131 is going to have to have a special connex sent over just to ship all the trophies that they have won. They have been able to field a team in everything from Boxing to Pinochle and usually won it all.

B1-131 since moving to Vilseck has started getting involved in the community activities and won their first event which was a trap shooting contest. Unfortunately for C 1-131 they now have competition since they apparently were not getting any from the active forces. By the way C 1-131 came in 2nd in that tournament.

Some of our toughest times are still to come. We can now see the light at the end of the tunnel and it becomes vitally important that we as leaders keep

Combat Lifesaver Course Offered to Germersheim Soldiers

SPC Joseph Lane practices a "stick" on victim
SPC Seth Blankenship
Photo SGT Chue

GERMERSHEIM, Germany- CPL Jensen from Heidelburg MEDDAC spent time recently teaching soldiers at Germersheim Army Depot the basics of being a Combat Lifesaver. Two courses took place, one on 2-4 June, and another 6-8 June. CPL Jensen brought IV supplies, field dressings, a fake arm for IV practice, and his motivation for the medical field. During the three day classes, soldiers were taught the medical expertise needed to become certified as a Combat Lifesaver. The topics ranged from those found in the CTT manual- such as applying a field dressing, splint a fracture, and first aid for choking, to those that go beyond the common skills- such as administering IV fluids, applying dressings to a sucking chest wound, and other skills necessary to help a fallen soldier.

"Each participant must get stuck at least once and each soldier must successfully stick another soldier in order to be a go at this station," CPL Jensen told the class at the beginning of the class on administering IV fluids. It was perhaps the most difficult task the class had to face to become certified. It began with a session on getting familiar with the supplies needed, and how to ensure everything was in working order. The class was then talked through the procedure while CPL Jensen inserted an IV into his own arm as a demonstration. Though somewhat reluctant, each soldier came to the table two at a time for their chance to get the stick. A couple of sore arms and a little blood later – and everyone had successfully met the requirements.

Upon completion of the instruction, the soldiers took a written test to ensure they had learned the necessary material to qualify them to carry th... Those soldiers th... eturned to their u... ommanders and th... hat its all about, s... ertified Combat L... iers.

Quick Reaction Saves Civilian

SGT Craig Funneman from B/ 2-130

TAYLOR BARRACKS, Germany – On 4 June 2002, a civilian passenger in a vehicle passing through the checkpoint was having difficulty breathing, was extremely pale and was sweating profusely. SGT Craig Funneman was at the scene and took charge. He instructed a soldier to call an ambulance, the civilian and at the same time, he moved the passenger into the shade and took steps to open the shirt, to include loosening clothing and keeping cool. When the Army's 101st Airborne Division called to the scene due to the serious condition of the individual. SGT Funneman's immediate action prevented a serious situation from getting worse. SGT Funneman and his team epitomize the unit motto, "ALWAYS READY!"

Flight Heroes continued...

"I realized he was out of control," Morsch said, adding the attendant managed to get the man back into his seat. But the man was cursing, and the airline captain came back to talk to him. After the captain left, the man continued to be disruptive. That's when Morsch asked Strauss to help with the situation. Strauss noted that Childress was in a nearby seat. Both young soldiers, former ROTC students at Joliet West High School, are more than 6 feet tall and are in good shape. Morsch described the Joliet soldiers as "all-American young men." "I could tell the attendants were upset and worried," Morsch said. "I asked them (the soldiers) if they were ready to go to work and follow my orders. I told them to do whatever they had to do to keep him away from the cockpit."

The next time that man attempted to get up and rush the cockpit, he had to face Strauss, Childress and Morsch. The three men stood guard around that disruptive passenger to keep him in the seat. "It was pretty tense at times," Morsch said. "There was a lot of pushing and shoving, and he did a lot of cursing and yelling. I don't know if he was mentally unstable, drunk or both." But the unruly passenger was unable to get out of his seat again for the remaining two hours of the flight. Police were waiting when the plane landed in Chicago. Morsch said several passengers walked up and thanked the young Joliet soldiers. LTC Morsch took the names of their military superiors and wrote letters about what they had accomplished. Copies of that commendation letter were sent to their parents in Joliet.

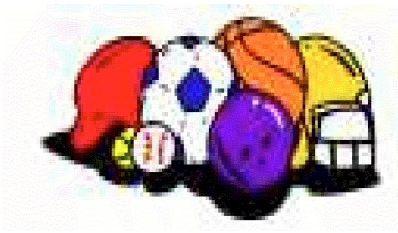
"Went above and beyond the call of duty to protect hundreds of innocent passengers on this flight," the letter states. "He stood guard over the disruptive passenger, and physically restrained him from attacking the flight crew or inflicting harm to the crew. He performed these difficult duties without regard to his own personal safety or well-being ... "The brave actions prevented what could have become a tragic situation. (They are) great examples of what is best about the United States Armed Forces, and represented your unit and all men and women in uniform in an exemplary manner ..."

Childress, who graduated with the Joliet West class of 2000, and his wife, Timwanna, have a 6-year-old daughter, Kristin. "I am so proud of my son," adds his mother, Norma. She said her son was on that flight from Germany so he could attend the funeral of his grandfather, Astuin Robinson.

Strauss, who graduated with the Joliet West class of 2000, remains in the Army and is stationed in Germany. He proud of Mike. "That's my buddy," added proud father Bob Strauss, who is a Vietnam veteran of the Army's 101st Airborne Division. "He is a hero."

Task Force Sports:

Kentucky Aces



* The HHC 1-149th Infantry Softball team (Kentucky Aces) was 4-0 for the season after an easy win over the 130th Engineers in a five-inning blowout 14-2. First Sergeant Sizemore pitched a spectacular game, making his first pitching start of the year. Great hitting also from second baseman Daniel Walker who went 4-4 including an inside the park homerun that scored two runs. Captain Tommy Black hit his second homerun of the season with a blast over the left field wall. The outfielder who was trying to track it down also fell over the fence in pursuit of the ball.

Sound defense and solid play led to only two runs scored for the opposition. Solid pitching from Sizemore laid the foundation, no strike outs for the Engineers, but no walks either. Many opposing batters found themselves behind early in the count before being forced to try to make contact, which lead to easy outs.

The Aces next game is going to be one of their toughest of the season as they play the 320th Engineers, on 12 June at 1730 @ the Pioneer Softball Complex (AKA Aces Park).

Intramural - Bragging rights were on the line. No game for the season, no game to decide who the champion of the league is, just bragging rights. HHC and E-Company of the 1/149th Infantry Battalion took the field of battle Saturday, June 1st. No, not a battle field, but a softball field. Members of each company traded their M-16 rifles for softball bats and gloves and played in the bright sunshine on the Pioneer Softball Complex in Hanau, Germany. Both teams had been talking smack all week, so for these two gladiators it was time to put up or shut up. The first of four games was won by a score of 13 to 8 with HHC getting an easy W in the first game.

After the first game, all players, coaches, and members of both units were encouraged to meet at the picnic area where Chef Slusher was grilling a feast for the warriors. Hamburgers, hotdogs, beans, chili, and all the other things that make a cookout great, were served and consumed by all who attended.

Then, as before, the teams squared off in game 2, with HHC coming out victorious in the second game by a score of 12-2. With 2 games won that day, HHC felt confident that they would rule the day, and determined to play one more game. HHC and E Company squared off once

Santa Fe Trailblazers

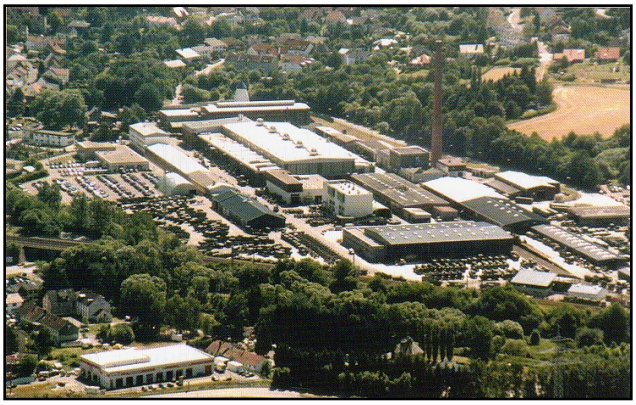
lactic titans, with HHC again coming out victorious by a 16-8 margin. With talk of ta Warsmore ie Trailblazers members of both teams lost a few players to fatigue, nburn, but what was left was the game of all games to watch, as rookie pitcher 1LT e mound to face his men who served under him for 5 years and at last Echo company did not get shut out - winning in a close game by a score of 28-26.

- Stories by SPC Hyatt HHC 149 IN (M)

Bravo Co. Blackhawks

*On a cold, rainy Wednesday night the 5th of June, the Germersheim Trailblazers won their softball game against A CO 302nd MI, 19-6. A joined effort from the whole team made it easily one of the best played games of the season. No thanks to e support from HHC 66th, ALL of the Trailblazers encouragement came from hose cheering section was greatly appreciated. They single handedly psyched team with many daunting chants and comments. The team was reassured to no matter rain or shine that C 1/178 would be there. Our next game is 17 JUN against HHB VCA, and the Trailblazers hope that this time C 1/178 will have some help from their HHC neighbors! The Trailblazer's next games are June 18 and 19 against 26th ASG and 30th MED.

- Story by SPC Street HHC 66th BDE



German System Maintenance Facility #860

Happy Birthday
US ARMY - June 14th!

A Special Salute!

For all the Father's here, and those coping at home – Happy Father's Day!

The *TRAILBLAZER* is published by soldiers, for the soldiers of
TASK FORCE SANTA FE

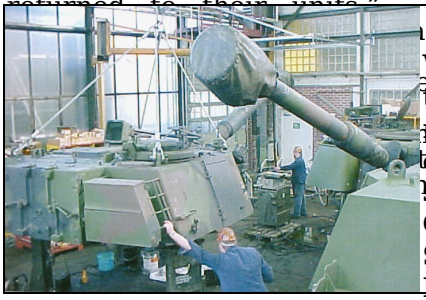
GERMAN ARMY SHOWS "THIS IS HOW WE DO IT!"

ST. WENDEL, Germany - On June 3rd, a delegation of Task Force Santa Fe's Logistical Integration Support Team (LIST) traveled to St. Wendel to tour the System Maintenance Center (SMC) 860, a large maintenance complex operated by the German Army. The facility, commanded by Colonel Zeisig, employs 750 personnel, of whom many are civilians. It is Germany's largest Army maintenance facility. SMC 860 provides repair, calibration, technical inspection, and modification of artillery weapon systems, small arms, automatic weapons, tracked and wheeled vehicles and NBC equipment.

After receiving a briefing outlining how SMC 860 performs its mission, LTC Chris Lawson, stated "The German Army faces many of the same challenges as the Illinois National Guard in terms of maintenance optimization, efficiency, productivity, and lowering costs." He went on to say, "SMC 860 has had success in overcoming these challenges and provided a model for us to follow."

LTC Lawson also stated, "Colonel Zeisig has demonstrated, by his innovations and initiatives, that the German Army maintenance program can be more productive and cost effective than the commercial industry."

The delegation was taken on a tour of the facility by Colonel Zeisig's staff, which included road testing many of the vehicles that are repaired at SMC 860. MSG Gary Bensa stated "I liked the fact that the German Army thoroughly road tests all of the vehicles after they are repaired before the vehicles are returned to their units." Colonel Zeisig [illegible] complete post-built test track [illegible] fording basin, [illegible] ge ideas and [illegible] can help foster [illegible] the experience



Workers in the maintenance and repair shop at the German System Maintenance Center.

The Army Song

"The Army Goes Rolling Along" is the official Army song and is played on many occasions. Soldiers should stand at attention when it is played or sung. The song was dedicated on Veterans Day, November 11th 1956. The music was composed in 1908 by Lieutenant (later Brigadier General) Edmund L. Gruber and was known originally as the "Caisson Song".

Verse: March along, sing our song with the army of the free.
Count the brave, count the true who have fought to victory.
We're the Army and proud of our name! We're the Army and
proudly proclaim:

First Chorus:
First to fight for the right and to build the nation's might,
and THE ARMY GOES ROLLING ALONG.
Proud of all we have done, fighting till the battle's won,
and THE ARMY GOES ROLLING ALONG.

Refrain:
Then it's Hi! Hi! Hey! The Army's on it's way,
Count off the cadence loud and strong:
for where'er we go, you will always know
that THE ARMY GOES ROLLING ALONG.

Second Chorus:
Valley Forge, Ouster's ranks, San Juan Hill and Patton's tanks.
And the Army went rolling along.
Minutemen from the start, always fighting from the heart,
and the Army keeps rolling along.

Refrain:
Then it's Hi! Hi! Hey! The Army's on it's way,
Count off the cadence loud and strong:
for where'er we go, you will always know
that THE ARMY GOES ROLLING ALONG.

Third Chorus:
Men in rags, men who froze, still that Army met its foes,
and the Army went rolling along.
Faith in God, then we're right, and we'll fight with all our might.
As the Army keeps rolling along.